THE

CASE

OF

Mixt-Communion

Friendly Discourſed,

BETWIXT A

MINISTER

AND A

Nonconforming Pariſhioner.

From whence may be Learned, upon what *Grounds* any refuſe coming to the Sacrament, becauſe of a *Mixt-Communion.*

I COR. V. xi. *But now I have written unto you, not to keep Company, if any Man that is call'd a Brother, be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with ſuch an one, no not to eat.*

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The Caſe *of* Mixt-Communion, *diſcourſed in a Friendly* Dialogue *betwixt a* Miniſter, *and a* Noncon-forming-Pariſhioner.

MINISTER,

GOOD *morrow* Neighbour! *I am this Morning come to have a little Diſcourſe with you upon my Obſervation, that you have not been at the Sacrament this* Eaſter, *notwithſtanding the Biſhops Order, which you know alſo was but according to the Law of the Land. We muſt Preſent you, and then you will be excommunicated, and laid up in Priſon, which I gladly would prevent if I could.*

Pariſh. Sir, I thank you for your profeſſed kindneſs to me, but Sir, my going to the Holy *Ordinances* of God is not to obey any *Biſhops Orders*, or any *humane Law*, but in *Obedience* to him, who is the true *Biſhop* of all our Souls, the *chief Shepherd of the Sheep*, and becauſe he uſeth to feed them in thoſe *Green Paſtures*. As to your *Preſenting* me, Sir, I cannot help it, my Saviour hath taught me in the firſt Place, to *fear him who can caſt Body, and Soul into Hell Fire.* I hope you are under no further Obligation upon you to preſent me, then thoſe hundreds alſo within your Pariſh which were abſent as well as I, ſo as we ſhall have Neighbours-fare; and if I have it not, your *Preſenting* will appear to be no *Act of Love* to my *Soul*, but malice to my Perſon, and a deſign to ſerve ſome turn: And indeed, Sir, I look upon my Self as one of thoſe *Sheep* that are appointed for the Slaughter, and that my coming to the Sacrament would not have prevented it. Beſides that Sir, I always abhorred Arguments of *Force* in ſuch a Caſe as this, and though I have other *Reaſons* which kept me away, yet the the forcing of all Perſons thither, that were *Sixteen Years of Age* was not the leaſt.

Min. *I pray Neighbour, why do you say so?*

Parish. Because Sir, I cannot understand of what *Complexion* that Soul should be, that should be forced to the *Lord's Table*; for whereas all Persons are either *Worthy*, or *not Worthy*, *prepared* both *habitually*, and *actually*, or *not so prepared*. To force those who are not *prepared*, and who must there *Eat*, *and Drink unworthily*, as (if we may believe St. *Paul*) 1 Cor. 11. 27, 29. to force Men upon the *guilt of the Body*, *and Blood of Christ*, and upon *eating* and drinking *Damnation or Judgment to themselves*, both which are certainly very great Cruelties. If they be prepared both *habitually*, and *actually*, they either have *such apprehensions* of themselves, or they lie under *contrary Apprehensions*. If they lie under *contrary Apprehensions*, it is a forcing them to *Eat doubting*, which is contrary to their Duty, *Rom.* 4. 23. In such a Case they ought to be argued out of their Doubts, not forced to go while they Doubt; this were a *compelling* them to break God's Commandments. If they apprehend themselves *worthy*, and *prepared*, they need not be *forced*, they will come fast enough of themselves; we have seldom heard of *forcing Men* to go to a *Neighbours Feast*; how it should be proper to force Men to the Lord's *Holy Feast*, I do not well understand, nor do I know one Line of Scripture, or Scriptural Reason, that can justifie any force in the Case?

Min. *You speak well, but why may they not be forced to get themselves worthy, and to prepare themselves, and so to come? Or if they be prepared, and worthy, why may they not be forced to judge themselves worthy?*

Parish. Sir, I always understood, that those only were *Worthy Communicants*, who were able to *discern the Lord's Body*, and to *examine themselves*, and who *had examined themselves*, 1 Cor. 11. 28, 29. And that the Points we are to *examine our Selves upon*, are, *Whether we be in the Faith? Whether Christ be in us, yea or no?* 2 Cor. 13. 5. and that the Apostles meaning by *examining our Selves*, whether we be *in the Faith*, or no, could not be, whether we be *Heathens*, or *baptized Christians* (that Examination would be soon dispatched) but whether we have by *Faith* accepted, and applied Christ to our Souls for *Justification*. Now Sir, it seemeth to me a very odd thing to talk of forcing Men to *believe in Jesus Christ*, it being a thing not in our Power, but of the *Gift of God*, Eph. 2. 8. *The Operation of God*, Col. 2. 12. all that with any pretence Men can be forced unto, is the use

uſe of thoſe *external means*, by which Men may come to *diſcern the Lord's Body*, and to believe in Jeſus Chriſt; now I hear of no forcing of People to be *Catechized* and *Inſtructed*, I only hear of *forcing Men* (whether inſtructed or no) to come to the *Sacrament*, which I cannot underſtand. Sir, you know, that though it hath been a Queſtion, *Whether a Religion eſtabliſhed by Law, may not be by Force defended?* Yet it never was a Queſtion, *Whether Religion might be propagated by Force?* The Affirmative of which none but *Papiſts* ever would Defend. To force Men to do what is not in their Power to do, or at leaſt what they cannot do *without a danger of the guilt of the Body and Blood of Chriſt*, ſounds in my Ears very uncouthly. And Sir, to *compel* by *Goals*, and *civil Penalties*, Men *to think themſelves worthy*, is every whit as odd; we have nothing Free, if our Thoughts be not ſo.

Min. *You know Neighbour that* Judas *was at the Sacrament, who was a Traytor?*

Pariſh. I do not know it Sir; but on the contrary, I know you cannot prove it, for as it is no way probable, that he ſhould ſtay after our Saviour had ſo openly diſcovered him to be the *Traytor*, Matth. 26. 25. Nor that if he had, he would have been ſo ready with his *Band of Souldiers as* he was; ſo *John* aſſures me that he *immediately went out, when he received the Sop*, which related to the Paſſover, after which was the Adminiſtration of the Supper. But Sir, this Argument for Unbelievers right to the Sacrament, is juſt like the *Papiſts* Argument, for *Peter's Primacy* from his being at *Rome*, of which our Divines uſe to ſay, That if they could prove it, it were nothing to their Purpoſe; but they can never prove it while they live. That which Sir alone can be concluded from *Judas* his receiving the Supper (if he did recive it) is, *That if a Man be a knowing Perſon in the Things of Religion, a Profeſſor of it, and his Profeſſion be not contradicted by a lewd Life and Converſation, a Church ought upon his deſire and willingneſs to it, receive him to the Ordinance of the Supper.* It will neither prove, that ſuch a one hath any *true right to it*, nor yet that every ſuch one may be compelled to it. Now Sir, I freely grant all this, without putting you upon ſo impoſſible a Task, as to prove that Chriſt did give that Ordinance to *Judas*.

Min. *I perceive that our Mixt-Communion is one great Thing that ſtumbleth you, in that Point I would gladly ſatisfie you, if it*

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be not done already, I ſuppoſe you have ſeen, and read a late Book called, The Caſe of Mixt-Communion.

Pariſh. I have both ſeen and read it.

Min. *I pray Sir, what do you think of it.*

Pariſh. In many things Sir the *Author* of it ſpeaketh *very well*, and I perfectly agree with him; but there are other things in which I cannot underſtand, how he agreeth with himſelf, more than with me; and there are other things in which he ſeemeth well enough to agree with himſelf, but he doth not agree with me, nor I with him.

Min. *I Pray Neighbour, let us Diſcourſe over that Book a little, for indeed there is the moſt that we are able to ſay: Do you not* (as he ſaith) *miſtake in the matter of a Church, thinking that only real Saints* are the Matter of a *Church. If you do, what ſay you to his firſt Propoſition,* That an external Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Faith, is enough to qualifie a Perſon to be admitted a Member of Chriſts Church.

Pariſh. It by an *external Profeſſion*, he means a *verbal Profeſſion* not contradicted by a *ſcandalous Converſation*, I fully agree with him. Nay, I will yield him more than he asks, for *Baptized Children* make no ſuch perſonal Profeſſion, yet I believe them true Members of the *Catholick viſible Church* (as all *circumciſed* Children were Members of the *Jewiſh* Church) nor can I conceive in what other Senſe the Apoſtle calleth Children *Holy*, but either as *Baptized*, or the Children of ſuch as were ſo. I will freely grant, that all Holy Perſons are not only fit to be admitted, but *actually admitted* Members of the Church, I mean the *Viſible Church*. Therefore Sir, to ſhorten our Diſcourſe, you may paſs over that *Reverend Authors* Ten firſt Pages, for granting his *Propoſition* it is no great Matter, whether I grant it upon his Arguments, or ſome of my own, and for any Particular Expreſſions, which I may poſſibly doubt the Truth of, it being not my Deſign either to expoſe any Perſons weakneſs, or to oppoſe my own Underſtanding to any others, it is impertinent to inſiſt upon them. I pray Sir read his Second *Propoſition*, p. 11.

Min. *The Second Propoſition is. That every ſuch Member, hath a right to all the External Priviledges of the Church, till by his Continuance in ſome notorious, and ſcandalous Sins, he forfeits that right, and by the juſt Cenſures of the Church for ſuch Behaviour, he be actually excluded from thoſe Priviledges.*

Pariſh.

Pariſh. I Pray Sir is it, *he forfeits that right*, and *by the juſt Cenſures of the Church*, &c. or is it, *Or, by the Cenſures of the Church.*

Min. *It is and by the juſt Cenſures of the Church*, &c. but why do you ask that Queſtion.

Pariſh. Becauſe Sir, I conceive much lies upon that little Particle *and*, for it importeth thus much, that be a Man never ſo notorious in his Life, yet he hath a *right to the Sacrament*, until he be *excommunicated.*

Min. *So he certainly hath, what can you oppoſe to that?*

Pariſh. Truly Sir nothing, if it be to be underſtood of a *remote Right*, and that he will have when he is Excommunicated; but very much, if it be to be underſtood of an *immediate proximate Right.* His *Baptiſm* indeed gives him a *Right* in Caſe of his *Repentance* and *Reformation*; but that he hath a *preſent Right*, I have Reaſon to deny, for if he hath, he ought not to be denied it; now I think it hath been the Judgment of all Churches in any Degree of Order, and of our own in ſpecial. That *Ignorant and Scandalous Perſons, ought to be kept from the Table of the Lord*; which they ought not, if they have a preſent and *immediate Right to come.* Beſides Sir, the *Author* himſelf grants it, and quoteth for it the Words of the *Exhortation* to be uſed before the Sacrament. He ſaith (as I remember) *that ſuch Sinners have undone, and made void what was done in their behalf in Baptiſm*; he reckons up ſome of thoſe Sinners, from the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. *Fornicators, Covetous Perſons, Railers, Idolaters, Drunkards, Extortioners*, and from our Liturgy, *Blaſphemers of God, Hinderers, or Slanderers of his Word, Adulterers, ſuch as live in Malice, or Envy, or in any other grievous Crime.*

Min. *That is ſuch Perſons ought not to be admitted, if they be once Excommunicated?*

Pariſh. The Queſtion is Sir, *Whether in their preſent State, they have a right to come to that Ordinance?* If they have not, they ought to be kept away, and there is no Order, no Government in that Church, where they are not kept away. The Steward of Chriſts *Myſteries* gives them out directly contrary to his Maſters Order, The Dogs eat the Childrens Bread. If they have a *right to come*, they ought not to be kept away, then to what Purpoſes is our *Rubrick* giving Miniſters Authority to keep them away? And our *Exhortation* before the *Sacrament* requiring them to *keep away.* Beſides, *Excommunication* is not that which debars them of their Right, but an Ordinance only to be executed, on ſuch

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as (antecedaneouſly to that) had no Right, and are now ſo adjudged by the Church.

Min. *But we muſt conſider our ſelves as Members of a Church, and what ever Right they may want; in our Eyes they want none, until the Church hath declared by Excommunication.*

Pariſh. Of that Sir I very much doubt. I moſt freely grant you, that as the *Church* judgeth not of *ſecret Things*, but of Things that appear, ſo neither ought any Private *Chriſtian*; but that the *unworthineſs* of a Perſon to receive thoſe Holy Myſteries, can appear to us no other way but by *Excommunication*; is what I deny, and I think upon ſuch Evidence of Reaſon as cannot be contradicted. For they cannot be excommunicated, till their unworthineſs doth appear: Can any Thing be plainer, than that of the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. *I have wrote to you, not to keep Company, if any Man that is called a Brother be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with ſuch a one not to Eat.* Upon which the *Author of the Caſe of Mixt-Communion*, thus excellently gloſſeth.

"Not only as much as can be to have no Converſation with "him in Civil Matters, (though ſome muſt be had while we "live in this World) but alſo, and more eſpecially to avoid "Communion with him in Religious Exerciſes.

Min. *But he goes on, and tells you how that is to be done, not by the forſaking the Church our ſelves* (ſaith he) *but by doing our utmoſt endeavours our ſelves to caſt him out.*

Pariſh. I grant he doth ſay ſo, and that he quotes *v.* 13. for his Purpoſe, *Therefore put away from amongſt your ſelves that wicked Perſon.* Now Sir, were it now in the Power of the Community (as it ſeem it then was) and were the Major part of the Church ſuch as they could *put away from amongſt themſelves* ſuch notorious Offenders, you would Object well: But I pray Sir, how ſhould we put them out? We muſt Commence a ſuit againſt him in the *Biſhops Courts*, and there be at *Libels*, *Allegations*, *Anſwers*, *Exceptions*, *Interrogatories*, and *In teſtes*, *teſtes & in bos*, &c. it may be a Year, and at laſt it may be have our *Libels* caſt out, and five or ſix Pounds Charge given againſt us (for it is no eaſie Matter to get Judgment againſt any that is no Schiſmatick). Do you think Sir, God requires any ſuch Thing at our Hands? Nay, it may be, he will appeal from the Sentence if it be given for us, and make it coſt us an 100*l.* more; theſe are all the endeavours we can uſe, and all this while, whether he

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be *scandalous* or no, is *in dubiis*, he is an *actual Schismatick*, and we must communicate with him for all the Apostles Precept, *With such an one, no not to eat.*

But Sir, besides this, the *Author* of that Book speaks quite contrary, *p.* 13. where he saith of such Offenders, *And thus as it were, breaking off from being in Communion with God, and virtually renouncing Church-membership, they at the same Time loose all Right and Title to those Blessings, and Priviledges, that were due to them upon the Account thereof. And in this sad State, and Condition, did the Primitive Christians reckon all, that had highly and notoriously sinned, amongst whom especially were the Lapsed, that had offered Sacrifice; they staid not for a formal Sentence to be pronounced against them by the Church, but look upon them as ipso facto excommunicate, and though till that was past, they could not be actually shut out, yet they began before to avoid their Company, and to forbear all Religious Communion towards them.*

I Pray Sir, what do I do more? Yet it is much more difficult now, than it was then to get any one Excommunicate for any *Moral Vice.*

Min. *I cannot Defend what every one saith, but what will you conclude from this.*

Parish. Nothing but the direct contrary to that *Authors* second *Proposition*, which you read, viz. *That every Member of a Church, hath not a present and immediate Right to all the external Priviledges of the Church, till by his continuance in some notorious and scandalous Sins, he forfeits that Right*, and *by the just Censures of the Church for such behaviour, be be actually excluded from those Priviledges*; for Sir, notorious scandalous Sinners, being baptized, are Members of the Church, till they be excluded, yet by his own Confession have no such Right, and may be avoided by Christians as to *Religious Communion* before such Sentence be past'd. Nor is this all I have to say against the Truth of that *Proposition*: What say you of Children, Fools, Persons Distracted, all of them are baptized; So are Members of the Church, but have no present Right to the Sacrament?

Min. *But the same Author laid his first Proposition thus: That an external Profession of the Christian Faith, is enough to qualifie a Person to be admitted a Member of Christs Church.* He saith nothing of *Baptizing?* Now you know that neither Children, nor Fools, nor Men distracted are in a capacity to make *Profession of their Faith.*

Pariſh. Sir, I very well know he doth, but if by *external Profeſſion*, he doth not mean being *Baptized*; he croſſeth all Men who do hold that *Perſons Baptized are Members of the Church*, neither do I know that any Miniſter of the Church of *England* requireth any other *Profeſſion*.

Min. *But you muſt know that the Law requires, that they be ſixteen Years of Age, therefore Children muſt not be admitted.*

Pariſh. Sir, our Queſtion is not about the *Law*, but about the *Right* of all that are Members of a Church, to the external Priviledges of it; whether a bare Memberſhip in a Church, gives all Members a right to all *external Priviledges of the Church*, till they have forfeited them, and be actually excluded? I affirm it doth not, all *Baptized* Perſons are actual Members, yet many of theſe are *Children*, ſome *are Fools*, ſome are *Diſtracted*, ſome are *notorious ſcandalous Sinners*, none of theſe have a preſent Right. Therefore all have not ſuch a right to the Sacrament. Nor doth a *Right to that Ordinance* ariſe from a *bare Church-memberſhip*.

Min. *I pray from what ſhall the Right of any then ariſe?*

Pariſh. From their Ability to *diſcern the Body of Chriſt*, and in a ſpiritual Senſe to *eate his Fleſh, and drink his Blood*, and to *examine themſelves*, whether they be in Chriſt or no, *&c?*

Min. *How can any Governours of a Church Judge of this?*

Pariſh. Sir, I grant none can, therefore I think none ought to be forced to a *Sacrament*. But yet they may Judge, *Whether Perſons have Knowledge enough to diſcern the Lords Body?* if they would but take pains to Diſcourſe with them; and as well refuſe ignorant Perſons as they do *Children*, and *Fools*, and *Lunaticks*, when as the Reaſon why Children (being Members of the Church) are kept from that Holy Table, is, becauſe they cannot examine themſelves, nor diſcern the Lords Body. They may alſo judge of the *Tree by the Fruit*. If they ſee any that live lewd and notorious Lives, they may judge they *want Faith*, and cannot in that Ordinance *eat the Fleſh*, or *drink the Blood of Chriſt*. This is, Sir, all that I plead for, that Perſons *notoriouſly ignorant, or ſcandalous* have no preſent Right to the Holy Table, but ought to be excluded, though they be *Members of the Church*, and not actually *Excommunicated*.

Min. *Neighbour! I cannot ſee but we muſt yield you this, and ſo make you amends, for your ſo friendly agreeing the firſt Propoſition with us; I do not think that Author's ſecond Propoſition is defenſible. The ignorant*

norant and ſcandalous, though Members of the Church by Baptiſm, and not actually excluded it by Church Cenſures, have certainly no Right to the Sacrament at preſent; it is the Judgment of our Church, and indeed hath been the Judgment of the Church in all Ages. Our Church doth acknowledge this, both in the Rubrick to the Office for the Communion, and in the Exhortation to be read before the Sacrament.

Pariſh. Nor do I ſeparate from that *Acknowledgment*, but I hope I may withdraw from thoſe who know, and tells us that they know their *Maſters Will*, and do it not, and need not to run the danger of *many ſtripes* with them.

Min. *It is no danger to you, how doth the preſence of unworthy Perſons at the Lords Table hurt you? If we do admit a Perſon, who apparently in coming makes himſelf guilty of the Body and Blood of Chriſt, let his Blood be upon his own, and our Heads; how are you defiled who have no Power to keep him away?*

Pariſh. Sir, if I were not in that Action a *Communicant*, and that not only with *Chriſt*, but with thoſe *Chriſtians*, that join with me; if the *Apoſtle* had not told us, that we who in that Ordinance are *one Bread* are alſo *one Body*, what you ſay were true. But being Chriſtians are to be conſidered in that *Ordinance* as *one Lump*; and the Apoſtle hath told us, 1 *Cor.* 5. 6. *That a little leaven leaveneth the whole Lump:* I cannot be of your Mind.

Min. *The Author of the Caſe about Mixt-Communion hath told you very truly*, p. 28. That, that is a Proverbial Speech, and ſheweth only that ſin, like Leaven, is of a very ſpreading and diffuſive Nature, not that it actually defiles where it is not admitted.

Pariſh. Sir, I am aware of what he ſaith, and do agree with him. *That a People in one Aſſembly are as a Lump, and a Wicked Perſon is as Leaven*; but I cannot agree with him in thinking that the Senſe of the Apoſtle is, *That a little Leaven is apt to Leaven the whole Lump*; but doth not Leaven it, unleſs every part of it be equally defiled: Sir, you muſt grant that *ſcandalous Perſons* by Gods Law ought to be excluded from the Church, by the Church. If the Church neglect their Duty, are they not defiled? It is true, every ſingle Perſon is not defiled, but the *Communion* is defiled. One *Achan* not ſought out and puniſhed, is enough to defile, and bring Vengeance upon the whole Camp of *Iſrael*.

Min. *Still I ſee, you truly make the defilement to lie in the Perſons not having performed their Duty, ſo that if you have done your Duty, their Preſence cannot defile you.*

Pariſh. I do indeed Sir, agree with you, that no Soul can be defiled, but by the not doing its Duty, and that if I have once done my Duty, I am free from any defilement by the preſence of unworthy Perſons, but Sir, here ariſe two Queſtions. 1. *Whether in many Pariſhes, the number of thoſe who are above Sixteen Years of Age, and ſufficiently ſcandalous, be not ſo great, as it is impoſſible that I ſhould do my Duty to them?* 2. *Whether any Law of God obligeth me to continue in ſuch a Communion, where I cannot diſcharge my Duty to the Members of it?*

Min. *Wherein do you think then your Duty lies towards thoſe that you make one Bread, and one Body?*

Pariſh. Sir, it is ſo excellently expreſſed by the *Author* of the *Caſe of Mixt-Communion*, that I ſhall but repeat his Words, *p.* 24. ſhewing, what Men ſhould do, that they might not be *Partakers of other Mens Sins.*

Firſt, (He ſaith) *they are frequently to exhort and adviſe them*, Heb. 3. 13. Chap. 10. 24.

Secondly, *They are prudently, with much Affection, to admoniſh and reprove them*, Lev. 29. 17. Gal. 6. 1.

Thirdly, *They are to bewail their Sins, and to pray for their Reformation*, Ezek. 9. 4. Philip. 3. 18.

Fourthly, *They are to avoid* (*as much as they can*) *their Company, eſpecially all familiarity with them*, 2 Theſ. 3. 14.

Fifthly, *If Private, and often Admonitions by himſelf, or before one, or two more will not do, they are then to tell the Church of them, that by its more Publick Reproofs, the ſcandalous Member may be reclaimed, or by its juſt Cenſures cut off from the Communion*, Matth. 18. 17.

I do agree Sir, that the Worthy *Author* of that Caſe, hath ſpoken like a Divine, in ſaying, That *if a Private Chriſtian hath done all his Duty towards any, whom he knows to be ignorant, or ſcandalous in the Pariſh where he Lives, and yet the Officers will admit him to the Lords Table, he may yet freely go and communicate*, his Soul is not defiled by the Preſence of others. But Sir, 1. In this Caſe *the Fellowſhip* or *Communion is defiled.* 2. You know as the World is now debauched, *This is a Duty impoſſible* for any Perſon to perform, when the Pariſh conſiſts of 500. or 1000. or 10000. Perſons, that are Sixteen Years of Age. And Sir, will you as a Divine tell me, that it is my Duty to continue in a *Communion* thus defiled, and in which it is impoſſible I ſhould perform that Duty which lies upon me, that I may *keep my ſelf pure*, by not *partaking of other Mens Sins*, 1 Tim. 5. 22.

Min.

Min. *You may then remove your Habitation into another Parish?*

Parish. I may so Sir, but my *Trade*, or *Course of Living* which provideth me Bread for my Family, possibly cannot be removed too. In the Parish where I am God hath given me *Custom*, I can Live; in a strange Place, I have the World to begin a new: Where hath God required any such Thing at my Hands? How shall I do that without tempting God?

Min. *Well, you must not separate; and that, you know, the Author of that Case of Mixt-Communion tells you again, and again.*

Parish. He doth so Sir, and that is the Substance of what he saith in his *Third Proposition*, from *p.* 23. to the end, but what doth he mean by *separating*, *Separation* is either *Negative* or *Positive*, I think in this Case a *partial Separation* in this Ordinance is lawful in both senses, and so far from being my unpardonable Sin, that it is my inexcusable Duty.

Min. *I believe that you must neither separate positively by joining with any other Communion, or Congregation; nor yet Negatively and Partially by withdrawing from that of your Parish.*

Parish. In this Sir, I beg your Pardon, for as the Apostle hath commanded me with scandalous Sinners *not to eat*, 1 Cor. 5. 11. So the Author of the *Case of Mixt-Communion* (as I told you) tells me, *p.* 13. That the *Primitive Christians did so*, not staying for a *formal Act of Church Censures excluding such Persons.* Now if before such scandalous Sinners were Excommunicated others *might forbear all Religious Commerce towards them* (which are his Words) then they might *Negatively Separate*, for what is *Negative Separation*, but avoiding Religious Commerce with Persons?

Min. *I am not bound to defend all which that Author saith?*

Parish. But Sir you are bound to defend what the Apostle saith, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. and 1 *Tim.* 5. 22.

Min. *I tell you, they must be first Excommunicated*, but the same *Author tells you*, *p.* 25. *That our Church hath given every Minister of a Parish a Power to refuse all scandalous, and notorious Sinners, the Lords Supper.*

Parish. But Sir, what if the *Minister* himself be one? Such a thing is not to be presumed of any in this City, nor yet of the *Major Part* of *Ministers* in *England*, but it is too true of many. 2. I do know (Sir) that the *Parliament* of *England* seemeth in the *Rubrick*, to have given Power to the *Curate* to keep away from the Sacrament *scandalous* and *notorious Offenders*, but what doth

doth this signifie, if the Curate will not exercise any such Power? 3. But Sir, neither doth the *Rubrick* give any further Power to the *Parish Minister*, than to suspend the giving of the Sacrament to such a Person for fourteen Days, within which Time he must *inform the Bishop*, that is, he must as a *Promoter* prefer a *Libel* against the said scandalous Person in the *Chancellours Court* (which it may be is kept at Forty Miles distance from him) there he must attend, thither he must bring Witnesses to prove his Charge, and it may be after a Years Attendance, he shall have Sentence given against him for his Zeal, and be condemned to pay seven or eight Pounds: Or if he hath a Sentence given for him, The guilty Person shall Appeal (though condemned) to the *Arches*, if he be again condemned there, he shall Appeal to the *Delegates*, and the poor Minister after spending 50. or 100 *l.* shall it may be, get one *notorious Offender* secluded from the Lords Table: Suppose there be (to speak modestly) but 30. or 40. such Offenders amongst Ten Thousand Communicants, when shall the Minister have done? You know Sir, I tell you how the Law is, judge you now what the Power given signifies, but only to make Matter of Discourse? All this while, the conscientious Christian is commanded with such *not to eat*, 1 Cor. 5. 11. yet must eat with them. I adjure you Sir, as you are a Minister of Christ, do you, can you think this is the Will of God?

Min. *Well, say what you will, you must not separate, and run to other Congregations and receive there.* The Author of the *Case of Mixt-Communion tells you*, That our Saviour and his Apostles kept *Judas* Company, after they knew him to be a Traitor, and *Abel* and *Cain* sacrificed together, and *Elkanah*, and *Hanah* worshipped together with *Eli*'s debaucht Sons, *p.* 27.

Parish. I know Sir, he saith so, but there is not one Tittle of what he saith to be proved, *Judas* till he received the *Passover*, was not discovered to be a *Traytor*. *John* tells us, that immediately *after he received the Sop he went out*, John 13. 30. We indeed read, *Gen.* 4. 3, 4. That *Cain* offered, and *Abel* sacrificed, but how doth it appear they did it together, and if they did, how doth it appear, that *Cain at* that Time was a *scandalous Sinner? Elkanah* and *Hanah* sacrificed in *Shilo* where *Eli* was (who was a good Man) and it is said *Hophni* and *Phinehas* were there, but how doth it appear, that they at that Time were scandalous? Or, 2. That *Elkanah* and *Hanah* (living at a great distance)

did

did know it? Or what other Place had they to Sacrifice in at that Time? If Sir, you put the Question, *Whether we ought not to receive the Sacrament with notorious scandalous Sinners, When we are forced so to do, or not at all to receive it?* it much alters the Case, and makes it quite new. I should not forbear the *Ordinance* wholly in such a Case, but you tell me, that though I can receive the *Sacrament* in another Place, where I shall not have such Company as God hath commanded me *not to eat with*, yet I ought not to do it, but to receive it with such Persons as I must not eat with (if I can avoid it, as the Apostle tells me.) Now Sir, that I must live without the *Ordinance* for ever (when I can enjoy it elsewhere under fairer Circumstances) or receive it in such a Communion as I cannot receive it in, without the Violation of an Apostolical Rule, nor keep my self from guilt, by having done first my Duty to such Persons prescribed by Gods Word, seem to me a most inaccountable Thing.

Min. *Well Sir, yet I tell you, that you must not separate, Separation is as great a Sin, as Drunkenness, and Whoredom,* &c.

Parish. Sir, I know I must not *separate* my self from Christ, nor from his *Church-Catholick*, nor from *any particular Churches* in any thing, wherein they walk according to the Rule of Christ; but may I not *separate* from any part of the *Church*, that walks not according to this Rule; In the mean Time, keeping *Communion* with another Part of the Church that walketh more up to the Rule? It is confessed to be a Rule of Christ, *That Ignorant and scandalous Persons ought to be shut from the Table of the Lord.* One part of the Church walk up to this Rule, use all due means to see that those who come to the Lords Table be such as are able to *discern the Lords Body*, such as probably shall not eat and *drink Judgment to themselves*, by being *guilty of the Body and Blood* of Christ. Another part does not, but makes the *Test* to be *Baptism*, and *sixteen Years of Age*, do you call this a *separating* to forbear Communion with the latter, in the mean Time keeping it with the former: Do you mean, by your *separating*, a *separating* from the Constitutions of Men? Surely Sir, that is no Sin, when it is done, that I may keep close to *Divine Institutions*; Parish Societies are no Divine Institutions, I am sure *not eating* with *scandalous Sinners* is a *Divine Institution*, 1 Cor. 5. 11. and so owned by all the *Churches* in the World, that ever were in any Order. Sir, I shall not make Comparisons of Sins, but considering that *Drunkenness*, *Whoredom*, and *Theft*, are *moral Sins*, which

have

have in them an innate Turpitude and Filthineſs, and are much againſt the Light and Law of Nature; I think you do raſhly compare with them an *Act* concerning which it is diſputable, whether it be a *Sin* or a *Duty*; if I muſt not *eat* with ſcandalous Sinners, I am ſure I muſt *forbear to eat*; if this be what you call *Separation*, it muſt be a Duty, not a Sin.

Min. *You ought to wait till ſuch Perſons be caſt out by the Church in a Regular way, otherwiſe you are a Schiſmatick?*

Pariſh. Sir, there is a Rule in our Law, which I always thought very reaſonable. *That no Man ſhall take advantage of his own Errors.* God Sir hath (as you ſay) ſet you over the Church in our Pariſh, and the *Biſhop* over the whole Diocеſs; if the *ignorant*, and *ſcandalous* be not caſt out, or at leaſt ſecluded from the *Holy Supper*, it is your fault, to whom you confeſs the Law of the Land, as well as the Law of God, hath given a Power to ſhut them out; if it hath not given you a Power, I am ſure it hath given the *Biſhop* a Power, the Law hath directed you to keep ſcandalous Perſons from the Lords Table for the preſent, and enjoined you in Fourteen Days to certifie the *Biſhop*. That there liveth one ſcandalous Sinner in any Pariſh not ſo certified, is your fault, if being certified, if he is not ſecluded, it is the *Biſhops* fault: It is very unreaſonable you ſhould take Advantage of your own Errors, to reproach us for *Schiſmaticks*. Were all ſuch ſecluded, we ſhould not ſcruple coming upon the Account of a Mixt-Communion: But if you will not Watch over the Flock committed to your truſt, nor be at the *Trouble* or *Charge* which the Law directs, is it our fault or yours, that we do not come? You will not execute your Duty, but tell us we muſt ſtay with you until you do, and for ought we ſee, we may ſo ſtay as long as we live.

Min. *I know of no ſuch ſcandalous, or ignorant Perſons.*

Pariſh. I pray Sir, what do you call ſcandal? The Apoſtle calls *Fornicators*, *Covetous Perſons*, *Idolaters*, *Railers*, *Drunkards*, *Extortioners*, ſuch, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. Our Liturgy in its *Exhortation to the Communion*, calls *Blaſphemers of God, hinderers and ſlanderers of his Word, or that be in Malice, and Envy, or in any other grievous Crime.* Suppoſe he be prophane, and common-Swearing, or curſing, or lying, or Sabbath-breaking, &c. Now Sir, if you know all the Perſons in your Pariſh, I Appeal to your Conſcience, do you know none ſuch that are above ſixteen Years of Age? For *ignorant Perſons*, did Sir, you ever Diſcourſe with them

them all about the Nature of a *Sacrament*, and the busines of Mans *Redemption by Christ*, if you did not, how should you know them?

Min. *If I do not know them to be ignorant, I may administer the Lords Supper to them.*

Parish. Sir, the Apostle saith, That Ministers are *Stewards of the Mysteries of Christ, of whom it is required, that they should be faithful.* I pray Sir, wherein lieth the *faithfulness of a Steward?* Doth it not lie in his giving out his Masters Goods, according to his Order?

Min. *Yes it doth, but how do we do otherwise?*

Parish. Suppose Sir, that a Nobleman should trust his Steward with a Summ of Money, commanding him to give it out to the Poor of such a Town. This Steward gives it out to all poor People that come to him, never enquiring whether they be of such a Town, yea or no: Is this Steward faithful think you? will it excuse him to his Master, afterwards accusing him, to say, *I did not know but* that *such and such Persons were of such a Town.*

Min. *How do you apply this?*

Parish. Sir, the Ordinance of this *Supper* is an Ordinance which Christ hath betrusted you as his *Steward*, to dispense out to such as can *examine themselves*, to such as can *discern the Lords Body*, to such as have competent Measure of Knowledge, that they can understand what they do: And to such as you have as good an Evidence as you can have, that they are not such as shall *eat and drink Damnation to themselves.* Can you think Sir, that your taking no Care to inform your self, shall be excused to your Lord and Master another Day, by saying, *Lord I did not know but all my Parishioners were such?*

Min. *I must judge charitably, and so ought you?*

Parish. Sir, I have seen *Justice* pictured blind, but *Charity* is always pictured seeing. It is woful Charity that judgeth a *notorious* scandalous *Swearer*, or *Curser*, or *Drunkard*, &c. a Person fit for the Lord's Table?

Min. *Neighbour! What is that to you what I do, may not you do your Duty, because I do not mine?*

Parish. In many Cases I know I may, in this I cannot, for it is my Duty, *not to eat the Lord's Supper* with those who have *no Right* to eat it, you will not keep them away, though you confess you have Power to do it, I cannot keep them away, therefore if I will obey God, I must keep away my self.

Min. *Was there ever any Church in the World, that had not in it many cloſe Hypocrites?*

Pariſh. Sir, who ever ſaid that *Hypocrites* were to be excluded? Do you call common *Swearers*, and *Curſers*, *Drunkards*, or *Sabbath-breakers*, *Hypocrites?* Who pleadeth for more than the Excluſion of theſe? Such as dare out-vy the *Heathens* themſelves, and challenge God to *damn them*, that commonly Scoff at all Religion and Godlineſs, and live without God in the World; you know Sir, we cannot walk the Street hearing the Voice of prophane Swearing, and Curſing, are theſe Men Hypocrites? Where is in them the leaſt Appearance of Religion? They proclaim their Sins as *Sodom*.

Min. *Are not Hypocrites the worſt of Men, and ſuch as ſhall have the deepeſt Portion in Gods Wrath? Are they not as bad as Swearers, and Drunkards? and by the ſame Reaſon to be kept away?* —

Pariſh. Sir, That *diſſembled Piety* is *double Iniquity*, I have often heard, and do believe, but Sir there is a difference betwixt Sins that are to be puniſhed, and ſhall certainly be puniſhed by God: And *Iniquities to be puniſhed by the Judge*, whether *Civil* or *Eccleſiaſtical*. Hypocriſie is not a Sin to be puniſhed by the *Judge*, but is reſerved to the Judgment of God.

Min. *You have no Ground for Separation from any Example in the Old Teſtament or in the New, where do you read of any of the* Jews, *that ſeparated from the reſt, though there were amongſt them ſome that were bad enough.*

Pariſh. Sir! God himſelf told Elijah *that he had left to himſelf ſeven Thouſand in* Iſrael, *which had not bowed Knees to* Baal, *nor kiſſed him*, 1 Kings 19. 18. And theſe the Apoſtle proves the People in *Iſrael*, whom God *foreknow*, whom God had *reſerved*, *Rom.* 11. 2, 4.

Min. *But you do not read, they went to Conventicles, though they would not bow to* Baal, *they did not ſet up an oppoſite Worſhip?*

Pariſh. Sir, I do not indeed read they did, but I read there of an hundred *Nonconformiſts* Miniſters together, that one Man kept with *Bread and Water* in a *Cave*, 1 Kings 18. 13. And I cannot but think, ſome *Informers* had made them hide, for prophecying at Meetings now called *Conventicles*, Sacrifice they could not any where but at *Hieruſalem*; but in all Times Sir, they *who feared the Lord ſpake often together, and a Book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name, and they ſhall be mine* (*ſaith the Lord of Hoſts*)

Hosts) *in that Day when I make up my Jewels, and I will spare them*, &c. *Mal.* 3. 16. But Sir, I find in Scripture another sect of *Nonconformists* much Ancienter. Indeed in *David* and *Solomons* Time there was none, for *David* kept close to the Rule God had given, 1 *Chron.* 28. 19. All this (said *David*) *the Lord made me to understand in his Writing by his Hand upon me*; this is call'd, *v.* 12. *The Pattern of all he had by the Spirit.* In the latter Years of *Solomon*, he tolerated Idolatry, but still for ought we find any where, the true Religion was the Religion of the Nation. But in *Jeroboam's* Time, there were a great many *Non-cons*, I pray Sir, see 2 *Chron.* 11. 13, 14, 15, 16. *And the Priests, and the Levites that were in all Israel resorted to him* (that is to *Reboboam*) *out of all their Coasts. For the Levites left their Suburbs, and their Possessions, and came to Judah, and Hierusalem for Jeroboam, and his Sons had cast them off from executing the Priests Office to the Lord.*

Min. *But Sir, though the Priests did go, what did the People, they were not to officiate at* Dan *and Bethel.*

Parish. Have a little Patience Sir, till I read *ver.* 16. *And after them out of all the Tribes of Israel, such as set their Hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel, came to Hierusalem to Sacrifice to the Lord God of their Fathers.* So they went to an opposite Worship, yet are not called *Schismaticks*, these now Sir were very Ancient *Nonconformists*, though they were forbidden by their Superiors; and *the Priests were a snare upon Mizpeh, and a Net spread upon Tabor*, to catch them as they crossed the Country; yet no Scripture calls them by the hard Names our brutish Age hath invented of *Schismaticks*, &c. but gives them the noble Character, of *such as set their Hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel.*

Min. Sir, *You mention Cases of Idolatry. The worshipping* Baal, *was idolatrous, so was the worshipping the Calves. It is true Sir, we must have no Communion with Idolaters.*

Parish. I pray Sir, how did the *Israelites* know, that *Jeroboams* Worshipping the true God before the *Calves*, was Idolatry? Did *Jeroboam* tell them so? Or did they judge of it themselves, and so judging, separated from it? If the latter, then we may still do the like.

Min. *Neighbour! who denieth, but that Separation from a Church in Case of Idolatry is lawful, that is the meaning of those Texts*, 2 Cor. 6. 17. Rev. 18. 4.

Parish. But Sir, how shall we ever know, what is, or is not Idolatray, if we be bound in Matters of Worship to obey our Superiours?

periors? Do you think they will ever call their own Worſhip *Idolatry*? If we our ſelves may be Judges in that Caſe, as to our own Practice, then, if we ſo judge, we are obliged to ſeperate. I confeſs, Sir, I am not of their Mind who think ſo; but you cannot but know, that ſome very Learned Men, both of this Nation and *Scotland* alſo, have ſpoken very ſmartly in this Caſe. I pray, Sir, have you read *Altare Damaſcenum*, or *Gilliſpy's Engliſh Ceremonies*, or *Parker of the Croſs*?

Sir, If we may our ſelves, as to our own Practice, judge what is *Idolatry*, and may lawfully ſeperate from Idolaters, it is as much as many will ask. But I, Sir, muſt ask more, (for I do not think there is any Idolatry in your Communion.) I would gladly know how Chriſtians come clothed with a Power to judge as to their own Practice, what is, or is not *Idolatry*, and to ſeparate from ſuch as they judge *Idolaters*, and yet to want a Power to *ſeparate* from them, who in a leſſer Degree, they judge to violate the Law of God in the Matters of his Worſhip. I mean not totally to ſeparate (that I own none ought to do, but from Idolaters) but to ſeparate from them, as to the Practice (with them) of thoſe Things, wherein they judge them to err.

Min. *Thoſe you mention*, 2 Chron. 11. 26. *Only ſeparated from Rebels*, Jeroboam *was a Rebel, his Commands in Matters of Worſhip were not to be obeyed:*

Pariſh. What ever *Jeroboam* at firſt was, he was no Rebel at that time, but by God confirmed in the Kingdom; for 2 *Chron.* 11. 4. God by his Prophet tells *Reboboam*, *This thing is done of me*; and *Reboboam*, in not going againſt him, is, *v.* 4. ſaid, *to obey the words of the Lord.* So that at that time *Jeroboam* was a *lawful Prince*, (for ſurely God hath Power to make one to be ſo:) Being ſo, he had as much Power to command in Matters of Worſhip as any *Prince* can have. He tells the People, 1 *Kings* 12. 28. *That it was too much for them to go up to Hieruſalem*; and ſets up two *Calves*, not requiring the People to worſhip them, but only to worſhip *Jehovah* before them; and ſo the People underſtood it, as appeareth, *v.* 30. *And this thing became a ſin, for the people went to worſhip before the one, even to Dan,* לִפְנֵי Upon this, thoſe *that feared the Lord*, out of all the *Ten Tribes*, ſeparated from *Jeroboam*, and went up to *Hieruſalem*. Neither is it ſaid, that thoſe that clave to the *Houſe of David* went, but thoſe that *ſet their Hearts to ſeek the Lord God of their Fathers*, went. So as clearly they went upon the Account of Religion.

Min.

Min. *What will you conclude from hence?*

Pariſh. First, That in thoſe Times the Godly Jews judged themſelves of what was their Duty in Matters of Worſhip, ſo far as to guide their own Practice, and accordingly practiſed contrary to the Judgment and Command of thoſe whom God had made their Superiors. 2. That they did not think it lawful for them, for the Sake of *Peace* and *Unity*, to violate the Commandment of God, which had required of them only to *Sacrifice* at *Hieruſalem*.

Min. Jeroboam, *when he ſet up the Calves, ſaid*, Behold thy Gods, O Iſrael, which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt.

Pariſh. Jeroboam could mean no more by that, Than theſe are the *Repreſentations of thy God*; or, theſe are the *Symbols of the Preſence of that God*; for it was impoſſible that either *Jeroboam* himſelf ſhould think, or that his People ſhould think, that the *Calves* were living, active Beings; nor, till *Ahab*'s Time, was there any ſuch Idolatry in *Iſrael*, as the worſhipping *Creatures*, as the Term of their Worſhip.

Min. *However it was Idolatry, and from Idolatry, and Idolaters Men may ſeperate; upon that account we ſeperate from* Rome.

Pariſh. But, Sir, how did it appear to the *Diſſenters* in the *Ten Tribes*, that their *Brethren* were *Idolaters?* Had either *Jeroboam*, or his *Prieſts*, declar'd his Worſhip to be *Idolatry?* If not, they were themſelves the only Judges of it; and this they judged Ground enough to juſtifie their *Separation*; nor doth the Scripture for it any where call them *Schiſmaticks*, but mentioneth them under the excellent Character of *ſuch as ſet their Hearts to ſeek the Lord God of Iſrael*. So that you ſee, Sir, that in the *Jewiſh Church* there were ſome that *ſeperated* from their Brethren for their Corruptions in *Worſhip*.

Min. *But, I pray, where do you find any Inſtances in the New Teſtament.*

Pariſh. Sir, In the *New Teſtament* we have both the greateſt Preſident, and ſeveral Precepts. The Example is of him who, *Heb.* 7. 26. is *holy, harmleſs, undefiled*, ſeparate from Sins. We ſhall find him, Sir, the firſt *Goſpel-Nonconformiſt*, if I miſtake not.

Min. *Is any thing more plain againſt you? He went into the Synagogues in Galilee, and heard the Law, and himſelf there preached; he went up to Hieruſalem yearly, and eat the Paſſover.*

Pariſh.

Pariſh. That is, he did not wholly caſt off Communion with the *Jewiſh Church*, but kept Communion with them in all things amongſt them, which were of his Father's Inſtitution, but in nothing elſe; for he would not ſo much as touch at their *Traditions*, nor *religiouſly waſh his Hands with them before he did eat Meat.* For my own part, I have nothing to ſay for thoſe that will not do as much. What Diſſenters are they that will not hear the Scriptures read and opened in the Church of *England*, eſpecially if ſuch Miniſters as they have good Thoughts of a Liberty to open them, and to preach to them. Prove, Sir, that our Saviour had a further Communion with the Jewiſh Church, than in ſuch Acts as were according to his Father's *Inſtitution*, and you ſay ſomething; but otherwiſe you ſay very little: For it is moſt certain that our Saviour did not tie up himſelf to that Communion.

Min. *You read of Corruptions in the Churches of* Rome, Corinth, *and other Places, but you read of no Separations from thoſe Churches, nor any Apoſtolical Precepts injoining any ſuch thing.*

Pariſh. This Sir I often hear ſaid, but with no Truth at all, *Rom.* 16. 17. *Mark them which make Diviſions amongſt you, contrary to the* Doctrine *which you have Learned, and avoid them.* There is a Precept for Separation from *Heretiks*, and ſuch as bring *falſe Doctrine.* 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. *If any Man that is called a Brother, be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with ſuch an one, no not to eat.* There is a Precept for Separation in *receiving the Lords Supper*, as well as to *Civil Communion*, that is not neceſſary with ſcandalous Sinners: 2 *Theſ.* 3. 6. *Now we command you Brethren, in the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that you withdraw your ſelves from every Brother that walketh diſorderly, and not after the Traditions which he hath received from us.* 2 Tim. 3. 5. *Having a Form of Godlineſs, but denying the Power thereof from ſuch turn away.*

Min. *You have now mentioned two Texts plainly againſt your ſelves, the Truth is, they are the two Texts upon which our Church doth chiefly proceed againſt you by Excommunication; becauſe you walk not after the Traditions of the Church, and becauſe you have a Form of Godlineſs, and deny the Power of it; creeping into Houſes, and leading Captive ſilly Women, laden with Sins, led away with divers Luſts, as it follows there,* 2 Tim. 3. 6.

Pariſh. I know Sir, they do talk of thoſe two Texts, to very little Purpoſe in the firſt, they have nothing to help them, but

but the sound of the Word *Traditions*, by which they mean Things that Men many Years after Christ have delivered, or practised, which are not delivered or commanded in Scripture. The Apostle speaks of nothing, but what themselves (who were the Pen-men of Scripture) had delivered to them. Now Sir, is not this Text think you well applied, to compare things deliver'd by the Apostles with things delivered by *Pope Victor*, or *Pope Gregory*, or the like. The latter is as well applied, the Argument from it lies thus. *If Men that deny the Power of Godliness, though they have a Superstitious Form of it, may not creep into Houses, when they may Preach the Gospel on the House Tops, and drive designs of leading Captive silly Women laden with Sins and led with divers Lusts: Then Ministers of the Gospel, who desire to live up to the Power of Godliness, may not, in a Time when they are suffered to preach no where else make use of Private Houses, and in them exercise their Ministry, to perswade Men to repent of their Sins, and turn to God.* Is not this brave Logick Sir.

Min. *Come, come, Neighbour, you rest all upon those Texts,* 1 Cor. 6. 17. Rev. 18. 4. *Come out from among them, and be ye separate saith the Lord*; which the Author of the *Case of Mixt-Communion* excellently vindicateth.

Parish. Sir, if we will give you leave to make our Arguments, it is your fault; if you do not Answer them sufficiently, but I pray Sir, what doth he say.

Min. He saith, *they are to be understood of coming out from those that were Heathenish Idolaters*, and Christian *Assemblies* are not so. Then he tells you, that the *unclean Thing*, they were forbidden to touch, was the *abominable Practices of the* Heathens *in the Worship of their Gods.*

Parish. We grant it Sir, that the Apostle there only mentioneth a *Separation* from *Idolaters*, and we do grant that the Church of *England* is no Idolatrous Church; but I pray Sir, wherein was the *Idolatry of the* Heathens worse then the *Idolatrous of the* Papists in worshipping *Bread*, or wherein was the *Idolatry of* Jeroboam worse than the Idolatry of the *Papists*, or any others who Worship the true God, but *before an Image, or any Creature* exciting their Worship, for it was impossible they should ever think *two Calves* made of Earth, or the Representation (rather) of *two Calves*, could be the Similitude, or *Representation* of the one *Living God*; the *Calves* were no more then *Motives*, or Monitors, or Remembrancers of them in their Worship of the true God.

Be-

Beſides Sir, what needed the Apoſtle to have minded the *Corinthians* to come out from Perſons, if his meaning had been only, that they ſhould not touch *the unclean Thing?* But to make this buſineſs ſhort Sir, we do not look upon the Church of *England* as Idolatrous, and therefore do not *totally* forbear Communion with Her; but we look upon ſeveral Things done by ſome that are Miniſters in that Church, as *Errors in Worſhip*; and therefore think we have Reaſon to *ſeparate partially*, as to thoſe things which we judge God hath forbidden us, and therefore we inſiſt on the other Texts, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. 2 *Theſſ.* 3. 6.

Min. *Thoſe Texts are no more to your Purpoſe than the other, for thoſe Precepts are given to the Officers of the Church, not to particular Chriſtians.*

Pariſh. Indeed ſomething may be ſaid in Defence of this, as to 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. becauſe the *Epiſtle* was wrote to *Timothy*, but no ſuch Thing can be proved as to the other Texts, the firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, as appear from *Chap.* 1. 1, 2. is written *Unto the Church of* Corinth, *to them that are ſanctified in Chriſt Jeſus, called to be Saints*; and in this Point he ſaith, *Chap.* 5. 4. *When ye are gathered together and my Spirit, with the Power of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to deliver ſuch a one to Satan.* And *ver.* 13. *Put away from among your ſelves that wicked One.* The ſecond Epiſtle to the *Theſſalonians*, is directed to the *Church of the* Theſſalonians, nor is it poſſible, that the Apoſtles Exhortation, *Chap.* 3. 6. ſhould be more reſtrained to Officers, then any other verſe in the Epiſtle is. It is the *Church* there, which the Apoſtle ſo ſeverely *commandeth in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt to withdraw from every Brother that walketh diſorderly.* And that this is not to be underſtood of *Goal Sins*, appeareth from *ver.* 11. where idle Perſons, and *ſuch as work not at all*, and are *buſie Bodies*, are deſcribed to be *diſorderly Perſons.* Admit Sir, they did concern Governours of the Church in the firſt Place. Suppoſe they will not do their Duty, do you think that the Members of the Church ought not to do theirs.

Min. *Without doubt* (*Neighbour*) *but ſtill you ſuppoſe it the Duty of Private Members of a Church, to withdraw from any of the reſt of the Members, though not caſt out.*

Pariſh. I pray Sir, (that we may not looſe our ſelves by running out of one thing into another) let us conſider, how far we agreed. 1. We are agreed, that *Baptiſm*, and a viſible Profeſ-

ſion

ſion of the Goſpel, not contradicted by a notorious Converſation, is enough to make a Perſon a Member of the viſible Church, though he wants true, and real Holineſs; becauſe Man can judge no further then from the outward Appearance; this was the Subſtance of what the *Author* of the *Caſe* of *Mixt-Communion* ſaid, under his firſt Propoſition. 2. We are agreed, that every *actual Member of the Church, hath not* eo nomine *upon that Account, a preſent Right to the Lord's Supper. Children*, and *Fools*, and Perſons that have no uſe of their Reaſon have no ſuch Right, becauſe they *cannot diſcern* the *Lord's Body*, nor *examine themſelves*, and the Caſe is the ſame for all Perſons *ignorant* of the firſt Principles of Religion; things neceſſary to be known, that People may underſtand what they do when they *eat* and *drink at the Lords Table*. No more have Perſons *notoriouſly ſcandalous* any Right, by which I mean ſuch as are not Secret Hypocrites, but live in Courſes of *Drunkenneſs*, *Swearing*, *Prophane Curſing*, *Uncleanneſs*, or any other grievous Sin. I have ſhewed you, that is the *Judgment* of our Church, and the Author of the *Caſe of Mixt-Communion* grants it up and down; *p.* 12, 13. and *p.* 37. Evil Men (ſaith he) till *they repent* have nothing to do there. 3. *We are agreed, that the Officers of the Church ought to ſeclude all ſuch.* 4. It is agreed, that with us in *England*, by the *Laws*, *Canons*, and Conſtitutions of our Church; *every Miniſter of a Pariſh hath a Power to refuſe all ſcandalous, and notorious Sinners, from the Lords Supper.* So ſaith the *Author* of the *Caſe of Mixt-Communion*, p. 25. So ſaith the *Author* of the *Perſwaſive to Communion*, p. 32. and every Biſhop hath a Power to keep ſuch away, till they give Evidence of their Repentance, as appears by the *Rubrick*. 5. I preſume alſo you will agree, that there is hardly any Pariſh, in which are not more then two, or ten Perſons above ſixteen Years of Age, which are *groſly ignorant*, or *ſcandalous*. 6. It muſt alſo be agreed, that *de facto* ſuch Perſons are not excluded. 7. It muſt alſo be agreed, *That for many Years laſt paſt, though ſuch Power hath been agreed, and eſtabliſhed, yet there is no Care taken, nor that we ſee like to be taken, to keep away all ſuch, as are confeſſed to have nothing to do at that Ordinance, more then if they were* Heathens. 8. It is alſo agreed, That the *Primitive Chriſtians, did not ſtay for a formal Sentence was pronounced againſt ſcandalous Sinners, but looks upon them as* ipſo facto *excommunicate, and though till that was paſt, they could not be actually ſhut out, yet they began to avoid their Company, and to forbear*

all Religious Commerce with them. Caſe of Mixt-Communion, *p.* 13. 9. It is agreed, that the Text 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. is to be underſtood, as well of *not eating* at in *Religious Exerciſes*, as of *having no* familiar *Civil Converſation* with them. The only thing then in Difference betwixt us, is this. 10. Whether conſcientious Perſons, may not in a fulfilling of the Apoſtles Precepts, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. 2 *Theſ.* 3. 6. Seeing that Miniſters will not fulfil their Duty in this Particular, though they have a Power to do it, *refuſe to eat at the Lord's Table with ſuch Perſons, judging them* (as the *Primitive Chriſtians*) ipſo facto *Excommunicate*; being yet ready to communicate with all Chriſtians in that Parochial Society, or any other Congregation, who being in the uſe of their Reaſon, and having any Competent Knowledge, live a Life free from evident and notorious Scandal; you think Sir they *may not*, I think they may, without any Danger of *Schiſm* or ſinful Separation, and a juſt fulfilling the Law of Chriſt, who hath betruſted no Officers in the Church, with a Power to admit to his Holy Table, thoſe who have *nothing to do there*, and who muſt there run the *Guilt of the Body and Blood of Chriſt*, and *eat and drink Judgment to themſelves*, and who though they defile no Perſon that is there, and hath done his Duty toward *God*, and *toward them*; yet defile the Society where the Officers or Members have not done their Duty, and moſt certainly ſpoil every conſcientious *Chriſtians* ſweet and comfortable Communion.

Min. *This is as great, if not greater Ignorance, than you have diſcovered, yet doth then my Comfort depend upon the Faith and Holineſs of another, or upon my own Faith and Holineſs?*

Pariſh. I think I have read it moſt truly obſerved by the *Author* of the *Caſe of Mixt-Communion*, that every Chriſtian is to be conſidered in his *ſolitary Capacity*, or in his *Relation to a Church.* Take him in the firſt Notion, his Comfort doth no way depend upon the *Faith* and *Holineſs of another.* I very well know that the *Juſt* muſt live by *his own Faith.* But his *Comfort from an Act of Communion with others*, doth very much depend upon the *Faith*, and *Holineſs* of others; I mean their *Viſible* or probable *Faith* and *Holineſs.* Could (think you Sir) any Members of a *Paſchal Society* amongſt the *Jews*, have *comfortably* eaten the *Paſſover* with a *Mixture of* Heathens, or legally *unclean Perſons* what hindred? His Conſcience muſt have continually been reflecting on him, thus, *I eat* this *Paſſover* with thoſe concerning whom God hath commanded *no Stranger ſhall eat thereof.* No *Leper*, none that hath

hath *touched the dead Body of Man* (till he be cleanſed) *ſhall eat thereof*; indeed, if he had not known that any of the Society, were ſo, it would not have ſpoiled his Comfort, for a Mans Comfort ariſing from any Duty, muſt ariſe from his *Holineſs* in it, that is, from his doing it according to the Will of God, as well with reſpect to thoſe that he communicateth with, as to his own perſonal Performance; and certainly Sir, if any Bread ought to be *eaten with Joy*, if any Wine *ought to be drank* with *gladneſs of Heart*, that Bread, that Wine ought to be ſo eaten and ſo drank. Beſides Sir, the Apoſtle tells us plainly, 1 *Cor.* 10. 17. *We being many are one Bread, and one Body, foraſmuch as we are Partakers of that one Bread.* Can any conſcientious Perſon comfortably by partaking of that *one Bread*, declare himſelf to be one *Body* with Perſons *ipſo facto* excommunicated, that have *vertually renounced the Covenant they* in their Baptiſm *made with God in Chriſt, and forfeited Church-memberſhip, and have loſt all their Right and Title to thoſe Bleſſings and Priviledges, which were due to them upon the Account of their Church-memberſhip by Baptiſm*; as the Author of *the Caſe of Mixt-Communion* excellently expreſſeth it, *p.* 13.

Min. *Well Neighbour! I ſee there is no end of talking to you. We muſt Anſwer you with Dr.* P. *his Seal.*

Pariſh. Sir, I and others of my Mind are in your Power, and what we may do when we come to that, that we muſt either *eat* or be *ſtarved*; I cannot tell, but I ſhall never voluntarily, and out of choice eat the *Lord's Supper* with thoſe who I know *have no Right to it*, but have forfeited all their pretended Right; and you muſt know Sir, that this is an unheard of Practice in the Church of God, warranted by no Precept, no Preſident of Scripture, and that the meer Reaſon of my forbearance, is your not doing what is your Duty, and what you ſay you have a Power to do, and let God Judge betwixt you and me. I may poſſibly be thrown into a Goal, and my Wife and Children want Bread, while I cannot work for them; but let the *Righteous God* judge who it is, who pulleth it out of their Mouths; but Sir, I beſeech you as a Miniſter of the Goſpel to hear me (the *Coloſſians* were commanded to *ſay to Archippus take heed to thy Miniſtry*) I will no more Argue with you, the ſinfulneſs of theſe Courſes; but let us conſider a little to what end, or of what Significancy theſe Violences are. Suppoſe you could prevail thus with ſome to come to the *Table of the Lord.* Can you think Sir, that by it you will pleaſe theſe Men, more than you will pleaſe God in it,

will they not look upon you as exerciſing a Spiritual Tyranny over their Souls? Will not this way of preventing a pretended Schiſm (for which there is no pretence, or colour, only you have got up an hard Word which in your Senſe is unintelligible) bring in a moſt evident and notorious *Schiſm*, lying in a *bitter hatred* one of another? Will not you, and all others that do ſo, make your ſelves an *hatred in the Houſe of your God?* Can you imagine, that thoſe you thus deal with ſhould ever communicate with you with any Freedom, any ſteadineſs, any more than needs muſt? Was there ever yet an Heart changed by a *Writ de Excom. capiendo*, or by a Goal? You force Men to come to Church, can you force them too to mind what you ſay? Can you force them to Love you? Believe it Sir, Love and Sleep (as we ſay) beſt come of themſelves. I am very apt to believe Sir, that you will hardly effect what you aim at by this, that is, to have none in *Civil Offices*, but ſuch only as you pleaſe: But good Sir, conſider, if you ſee not that Effect of it, yet what Effects of it you will certainly ſee, I mean *Prejudices* againſt your ſelf, that will out-live you. How ſhall my Soul be ever reconciled to that Man, that will force me to *eat and drink Judgment to my ſelf?* Or to do that which I cannot do with a ſafe Conſcience? For my own Part Sir, I am but one Man, and not much concerned for a Family of Children that muſt live upon my Labour, and though I think no more lawful in this Caſe then others do, upon choice, yet it may be *upon force*, I may think more lawful, ſo long as that force holdeth. Excepting *Idolatry*, I do think very few things unlawful in the Worſhip of God under ſome Circumſtances, and that Circumſtance above all others. I can communicate with you, ſo that my *Suffrage* is not like to be gained or loſt by this Artifice, but I muſt do it, praying God to *forgive you*, for I am ſure you ought to adminiſter it to none but are viſibly Worthy, and your *forcing* me, is what will never *inhance* you in my Thoughts.

Min. *Neighbour! What would you have me do, you know I am a Perſon under Authority?*

Pariſh. Sir, if you be obliged (as truly I think you are by the Law) to give it to all that are ſixteen Years of Age, and are not *ignorant* nor *ſcandalous*. I would have you ſo *Catechize* and *Inſtruct* your Pariſhioners under that Age, that they may underſtand all the Principles of Religion, this you may do, publickly, and from Houſe to Houſe, and you have Time enough to do it, be-

betwixt the Age of eight or sixteen; if any refuse to be so instructed, you may Certifie the Names of all such to the *Bishop*, you may I hope *watch over your Flock*, observe the Lives of all such Persons as are above sixteen; and if you know or find any guilty of any notorious Crimes, and continuing in them, you say (and you say it truly) that you may refuse them the Sacrament, and Certifie their Names within fourteen Days to the *Bishop*; if he will not do his Duty, you indeed are Free; but if you do not, he is Free, and you are Guilty.

Min. *If any one will come and inform me, and undertake to prove any notorious Crimes against any, I shall be ready to Certifie, provided they will undertake to prosecute and prove.*

Parish. Sir, I do not think any such thing lies upon your *Parishioners* as their Duty; I do know, that if they know any such, they are bound to *admonish them, once, and again*; and if they go on, they are bound to inform you, and if you desire Proof they are bound to make it, but they are not bound to go and inform the *Bishop*; that *Sir, is* (by the Law) your work, not theirs, nor do I know that God's Law doth require any such thing of them.

Min. *How then am I bound?*

Parish. As you have taken the Charge of the Flock and so are bound to watch over it, if you had a foresight of the Trouble, and Charge, that (according to our Constitution) would be Consequent to it; you ought not (if you thought it not possible to be discharged) to have undertaken it, having undertaken it, you are under an Obligation to go through with it. If the *Bishop* acquiesceth in your Judgment, the Work is soon done; if he doth not, the guilty Person appealeth from your Act, not from the *Parishioners*. What have they to do more then to inform you?

Min. *Surely they must prove their Charge, must they not?*

Parish. Yes Sir, they must prove it to you, but it is more then I know, that they are obliged at their own Charge to ride Thirty or Forty Miles to prove it in an Ecclesiastical Court.

Min. *Neighbour this is a Thing not possible to be done?*

Parish. Sir, I do not I confess think it probable, that it ever will be done, but if it be impossible to be done, it is (according to our Constitution) impossible the Church should be reformed, as it ought to be, according both to the Rules of Scripture, and the Rules of our Church also: Which I hope hath not made Rules for things that are impossible. I must confess, I think this can-

cannot be done without any more Trouble and Charge than any Miniſter will undertake; but then, why ſhould not the Miniſters give us leave peaceably to withdraw, providing for our Souls as we are able?

Min. *No Neighbour, you muſt not ſeparate I tell you?*

Pariſh. I tell you Sir, I do not deſire to *ſeparate*, if I may but ſee you doing your Duty, and ſhutting from the *Lords Supper*, thoſe whom you confeſs to have *forfeited their Right to it*, and whom our Church hath told you *ought not to come there*, and given you a Power (as you confeſs alſo) to keep them away. If Sir, you will not, I ſhall not take my ſelf to *ſeparate from the Church*, while I withdraw from Communion with you, not keeping to the Laws of Chriſt, yea, and of the Church too, which you own.

Min. *If I do not my Duty, you may and ought to proſecute me?*

Pariſh. Sir, I know no Law of God obligeth me to a buſineſs of ſo much Charge, and fruitleſs Labour. Thoſe who have been at Pains and great Charge to proſecute Miniſters for more apparent Crimes than the neglect of a Duty, have not met with ſo good Incouragement, that I ſhall adventure on any ſuch Thing; neither Sir, do I look upon you as *my Paſtor*, I never choſe you, I never ſubmitted my Soul to your Conduct; though indeed I have paid my Tithes to you as the Law requireth, and it may be ſomething more, to incourage the Preaching of the Goſpel. Sir, I look upon my coming to hear or receive the Sacrament with you, or any other not choſen by me, or by me ſubmitted to, but as Acts of *occaſional Communion*; which if I were in *Holland*, *France*, *Scotland*, or *New-England*, I would afford the Churches there, though I owned none of their Miniſters as my proper Paſtor: Nor ſhould take my ſelf to be concerned in the Lives of their Miniſters or People.

Min. *Suppoſe all ignorant and ſcandalous Perſons were kept from the Sacrament, would you and other* Diſſenters *then come to Church conſtantly, and hear the Common-Prayer, and the Sermons in your Pariſh Church?*

Pariſh. Sir, for my ordinary, conſtant Communion I owe it to the *Paſtor*, and People, to whoſe *Conduct* I have committed my Soul, by my *own Choice*, or *voluntary Submiſſion*, and to no other; for an *occaſional Communion* I owe it to all Churches in the World, not polluted with *Idolatry*, and from whom God is not departed, and by the Grace of God I ſhall ſo long as I live.

Min.

Min. *Sir, I hope you will not deny, but that your Superiours may chuſe your Paſtor for you?*

Pariſh. Sir, I will not deny, but my *Superiours* may diſpoſe of the *Glebes*, and *Parſonage-Houſe*, or *Vicarage* in Pariſhes as they pleaſe, and that it is the Superiours Duty, to appoint Miniſters to Preach the Goſpel where ſuch are wanting: But for ſetting a *Paſtor over my Soul*, I will only ask of you, whether you will allow them a Power to determine you to a Wife for your Bed, a Phyſician for your Body, a Trade for your Child, a Lawyer for your Eſtate, or a Shop where you ſhall buy your Goods. When you Sir will allow your Superiour Power in theſe Things, I will tell you, that the *Charge*, and *Welfare* of a Soul is Ten Thouſand Times more than any of theſe, and the Difference betwixt Miniſters is as great, as Women to be made Wives, or Phyſicians, or Lawgivers, or Trades: God in doing good to Souls ordinarily not working in a Miraculous way, but in a rational Way, and while I live I ſhall hear thoſe Preachers, who Preach that Doctrine which to me appears to be moſt true, and confirm'd by Scripture, and who confirm their own Doctrine by an Holy Life; and alſo, who Preach to me moſt intelligibly, and are moſt fitted to my Capacity; though I ſhall neither refuſe to hear, nor to receive the Sacrament with others who Preach the Truth, and adminiſter the Sacrament in any Degree according to the *Divine Rule*; though poſſibly I know ſome others, who Preach more profitably, and adminiſter the Sacrament more ſtrictly according to Rule. This is all Sir, you are ever to expect from me.

Min. *But Neighbour, what do you ſay to the Common Prayer?*

Pariſh. Sir, I can hear it, and never ſcrupled ſaying *Amen*, to any honeſt *Petition* in any Mans Prayer. Nor do I know of one ſinful Petition in that *Collection of Prayers*. If any thing in it be defective, I can ſupply it by my own Prayers at home. Though Sir, I ſhould not chuſe it, nor poſſibly uſe it as a Miniſter; if I were in that Capacity, I ſhall hardly I believe looſe *Twenty Pound* a Month for not hearing the *Common-Prayer*, but rather venture the loſs of 5 *s.* or 10 *s.* when I have done, or before that begins, to hear other Prayers which more pleaſe me. To give you Sir, a certain Rule by which you may know me. *I can be preſent at any Worſhip of God, where I know not there is any Idolatry, I can heartily join in any Worſhip, wherein I am perſwaded God is worſhipped according to his Will, or in ſuch Parts of it, as I know*

know he is ſo worſhipped in. If I be left to my Liberty, I will not chuſe that Worſhip, as to which (though I have a Latitude) *I know many other conſcientious Perſons are not ſatisfied as to their Practice. But if I muſt ſo Worſhip,* or be *put to Death,* or *thrown into a Goal,* or *be ruined any way*; if there be no *Idolatry* in it, I *can do* it, though I ſhall ſo do it, as all ſhall ſee I *have no mind to it*; I do not think that any thing in *Worſhip* leſs then *Idolatry*, will either juſtifie a total *Separation* from any Church of which we are once Members, or juſtifie a Perſon under great Degrees of Sufferings; though there may be many leſſer failings in Worſhip, which may juſtifie a *partial Separation* (as to thoſe Things) and it may be ſome more moderate Degrees of Suffering.

Min. *But is there nothing to be done for Peace, and Unity, and to keep out Popery.* Neighbour!

Pariſh. Sir, I have read ſome late Writers, that think there is very little danger as to *Popery*. He who wrote the *Reſolution of the Caſe about Symbolizing with the Church of* Rome, tells us, *p.* 28. *Thanks be to God, there is no ſuch Inclination in the Members of our Church, to go over to that of* Rome, *nor hath any ſuch Inclination been obſerved ever ſince the Reformation.* But however, the way to keep Men from it, is to keep as far off it as we can, not leaving the Word of God, God himſelf judg'd this the beſt way to keep off People from *Pagan Idolatry*. As to *Peace* and *Unity* Sir, there is no *Sin* to be committed for the Purchaſe of it. Nor do I underſtand, how I break Unity, becauſe I do not receive the Sacrament at my Pariſh Church, nor ſay the ſame Words in Prayer my Neighbour doth; Do not you as much break Unity, in not Preaching the ſame Sermons your Neighbour Miniſter doth? Or not poſſibly always read all the ſame Prayers, or not at the ſame Place, or in the ſame Poſture? I profeſs an Unity with you in the ſame *Doctrine* of Faith, and in the ſame ſpecifical Acts of Worſhip; as well as in *Affections* and *Deſigns* for the ſame good of the *Body Politick*; Is Unity broken when one at Church prayeth ſtanding, another kneeling, another ſitting? What do you mean by Unity?

Min. *I mean in Obedience to the Laws?*

Pariſh. Then it is to be preſumed, that all *Conformiſts* do uniformly obey the Laws of the Church; you cannot but know Sir, that you do not obſerve ſuch an Unity your ſelves, ſome particular Perſons amongſt you are very high to obſerve the Rubrick

Rubrick to a Tittle, others are not so. You are very zealous for some Canons, as to others you regard them not.

Min. *We all own the Government by Bishops, and come to hear the Common-Prayer; and come at no Conventicles.*

Parish. Now *Sir*, you have said all, I know nothing else that is fit for me to Name, that you are united in. But (Sir) are you all agreed, that *Bishops* are *jure Divino?* Doth the Law own or declare them as such? If it doth not, many *Dissenters* can allow them *jure Humano.* There they are then at *Unity* with you; you know many (and my self for one) come oft to hear *Common-Prayer*, we only differ from you. That we *forsake not the assembling of our selves together (as the manner of some is) but exhort one another, and so much the more, as we see the Day approaching*, Heb. 10. 25. And for *Peace*, I Pray *Sir*, how do *Dissenters* in your Parish break the *Peace of the Church*, more in going to hear and receive the Sacrament at another Place, than *Frenchmen*, and *Dutchmen*, or *Jews*, or *Papists*, who do the same Thing, yet you do not judge the Peace of the Church broken by them? How come *Dissenters* only to be charged with breaking the Peace of the Church?

Min. *Well* (Neighbour) *we have discoursed these Points long enough; at the beginning of our Discourse you were speaking of other Reasons of your forbearance from the Communion of our Church in the Sacrament, I would be glad to know all you have to say.*

Parish. Sir, I know but of Three Things, which make any sober Persons dissent. Some scruple *the administring of it by the Liturgy*, that doth not keep me away. 2. The *Mixture of the Communion*, as to which you have given me no *Satisfaction*, for that which you say is, That though a Person hath (for want of Knowledge) no Right to the Ordinance, or hath forfeited his *Right* and hath nothing to do there, yet we are bound to keep Communion with them, till the Governours of the Church have cast him out; although it be in their Power to shut them out, and they never concern themselves in it, nor move one step about it. This I can never believe, and you have my Reasons for it. 3. The Third is *Kneeling in the Act of Receiving*, to which (of late) you are grown very strict.

Min. *I thought that would come out at last, but have you not seen that Case handled clearly, as well as the Case of Mixt-Communion?*

Parish. Yes Sir, I have, and read it too.

Min. *I Pray what do you think of it?*

Pariſh. Sir, I think of it, as I do of many Commentaries I meet with, where the Authors are very large upon many plain Texts (obvious to every *Reader*) but when we come to look them in any difficult Texts, we find juſt nothing ſaid.

Min. *Why I pray Neighbour, what Argument hath he not anſwered, brought againſt Kneeling?*

Pariſh. Sir, our Time now is now much too far ſpent, to enter upon that Argument about which whole Books have been wrote; and I perceive that *Author* hath looked into ſome of the Principal of them; but Sir, I pray give me leave to ask you ſome few Queſtions. *Is not Kneeling there required as a Religious Act.*

Min. *Yes, without doubt, but what then, or why do you ask that Queſtion? Is it the worſe for that?*

Pariſh. Poſſibly I may think it is, I only ask it, that I may diſtinguiſh it from our Civil *Kneelings* to *Princes*, or any other *Superiors*, which I do not at all Queſtion. Being a *Religious Act*, muſt it not needs be a *poſture of Adoration.*

Min. *It is a poſture of Reverence?*

Pariſh. I pray Sir ſpeak cloſely, in all *Adoration* there is *Reverence*, but *Adoration* (Sir) is ſomething more then *Reverence*, every one who *reverenceth* another, doth not *adore him.* The Soul may *Reverence* God, in hearing of his Word; but yet it doth not *adore him* in that Act.

Min. *This is a nice Diſtinction, but I pray Neighbour ought not God to be adored?*

Pariſh. Doubtleſs, he ought Sir, if you ſpeak of an *internal Adoration* (which indeed ſignifies nothing but the inward *Reverence*, and Subjection of the Soul unto him) it is due to God at all Times: But we are ſpeaking Sir of an *external Adoration.* And in that Senſe, God is not to be *adored* under all Circumſtances. You know the Second Commandment, forbids the *bowing down of our ſelves to an image.*

Min. *Do you take then the Sacrament to be an Image?*

Pariſh. By no means Sir, but I take it to be an *inſtituted Repreſentation of the Death of Chriſt*, and we are bid to receive it in remembrance of him. It is true, we muſt not compare it to a *Crucifix* uſed in the *Popiſh* and in the *Lutheran* Churches (tho' the latter will indure no bowing down before it) for it differs in the *Inſtitution.* Chriſt hath appointed this Ordinance for a remembrance of him, he never appointed that. But Sir, Chriſt hath not appointed, that we ſhould receive this Repreſentation of

of himself in a posture of *Adoration*. The *Papists* have Reason to receive it in such a posture, because they fancy that the *Bread* is turned into the Body of Christ: So have the *Lutherans*, because they as absurdly affirm, that *Christ* is *bodily Present* in the Place, and at the Time when the Sacrament is administred; but our Church you know hath disclaimed both these Things. Whom? Or what do we then bow down to, and Worship?

Min. *The true and living God who ought to be adored.*

Parish. Very well Sir, but then the Question is. *Whether a Christian may by an external Act of Adoration, adore the true God before a Creature exhibited to him, as particularly at that Time exciting and moving him to that Adoration.* This Sir, is the great pinch, if this can be made appear to be lawful, I should not stumble at *Kneeling*. If Kneeling were ever used in Worship but as a posture of Adoration, I should think it as unquestionably lawful as *sitting*, or *standing*. And considering the Errors of the *Papists*, and all the *Lutheran Churches*, about Christs *bodily Presence*; I believe *Kneeling* is their Duty, till they alter their Judgements about that: But we own no such adorable Presence of Christ, we *adore* only *Our Father* which is in *Heaven*, whom we confess we ought to *adore*; but not in all Places, and under all Circumstances, nor by an external Adoration in all *Ordinances*. This Sir is the *Scottish* Ministers great Argument, which the *Author* of the *Case of Kneeling* (as I remember) toucheth not. But this leads us into a large Field of Discourse. I hope Sir, we may see some short Discourse upon that Question, from whence we may conclude our Duty, as to the Point in Question. In the mean Time (Sir) let us conclude our Discourse here. Though Sir, I cannot in all Points agree with you, yet I shall never refuse to hear you using means to convince me. *The Lord guide us into all Truth.*

FINIS.